

maxilla. There are no vomerine, palatine, or pterygoid teeth, such as are met with in Amphibia and E-cptilia.

The other peculiarities of the mammalian teeth, though true of the great majority of cases, are none of them absolutely universal.

But it is necessary to go into the subject at some length on account of the great importance which has been laid upon the teeth in deciding questions of relationship ; moreover, largely no doubt on account of their hardness and imperishability, our knowledge of certain extinct forms of Mammalia is entirely based upon a few scattered teeth ; while of some others, notably of the Triassic and Jurassic genera, there is not a great deal of evidence except that which is furnished by the teeth. Indeed

the important place which odontography holds in comparative anatomy is from many points of view to be regretted, though inevitable. " In hardly any other system of organs of verte-brated animals/' remarks Dr. Leche, " is there, so much danger of confounding the results of convergence of development with true homologies, for scarcely any other set of organs is less conservative and more completely subservient to the lightest impulse from without." Affinities as indicated by the teeth are

sometimes in direct contradiction to those afforded by other organs; or, as in the case of the simple Toothed "Whales, no evidence of any kind is forthcoming. Dr. Leche has pointed out that, judged merely from its teeth, *A. retict-is* would be referred to the Itaceoons, though it is really a Viverrid ; while *JBas&wise'us*,

which Sir "W. Flower showed to be a Haccoon, is in its teeth a "Viverrid. Mr. Bateson has been obliged to hamper the subject with another difficulty.

In dealing with the variations of teeth,<sup>1</sup> Mr. Bateson has brought together an immense number of facts, which tend to prove that the variability of these structures is much greater than had been previously recognised; that this variability is often symmetrical; and that in some animals, as in " *Oanis cancrivorus*,"

a South American fox, the majority showed some abnormality,"

When we learn from Mr. Bateson that " of *Jfylis*  
*fontanieri*, an  
aberrant leopard, two skulls only are known, "both  
showing dental  
abnormalities/" it seems dangerous to rear too  
lofty a super-  
structure upon a single fossil jaw. It must be noted  
too that,  
\* *Materials for the Study of Variation*, London, 1894\*